



U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
536 S. Clark St. 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60605

FEMA

The Honorable Randy McCallum
Mayor, Village of Alorton
4821 Bond Ave
Alorton, IL 62207

OCT 05 2007

Dear Mr. McCallum:

This letter is in regard to the levees shown on the effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and in the effective Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports for communities in Madison, St. Clair and Monroe Counties in Illinois. As you may know, the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is in the process of producing new flood risk maps for the nation and, as part of that effort, countywide FIS reports and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) will be issued for Madison, St. Clair, and Monroe Counties.

As part of FEMA's effort to produce the DFIRM, it was determined that the flood hazard information presented on the effective FIRM and in the effective FIS report is based, in some areas, on flood protection provided by at least one of five levee systems in the Metro East area that include the following:

- Wood River Drainage & Levee District
- Chain of Rocks Levee
- Metro East Sanitary District
- Prairie Du Pont Levee & Sanitary District
- Fish Lake Drainage & Levee District

Based on the information available and on the mapping standards of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) at the time the FIS was performed, FEMA accredited these levees with providing protection from the flood that has a 1-percent-chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The 1-percent-annual-chance flood also is referred to as the base flood.

Recently, FEMA was informed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) that they have determined the levees identified above do not meet the requirements set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Section 65.10 (44 CFR 65.10), entitled "Mapping of Areas Protected by Levee Systems". Since the levees and levee systems identified above do not meet the requirements set forth in 44 CFR 65.10, they will be de-accredited and therefore will not be shown on the future DFIRM as providing protection from the base flood.

You were invited to a meeting hosted by the East West Gateway Council of Governments and Congressman Jerry Costello that was held on August 29, 2007 to discuss the status of the levees and FEMA's de-accreditation process. The area landward of the levee will be mapped as a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) on the DFIRM when it is prepared. Therefore, federally regulated lenders will require the purchase of flood insurance on loans secured by structures located in the de-accredited area when the DFIRM becomes effective. In addition, continued participation in the NFIP will require your community to adopt and enforce local floodplain management regulations in these areas. It is highly recommended that you consider this risk in your local emergency management plans, including creating evacuation plans for this area.

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EXHIBIT

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Please note, there is a provision in the NFIP regulations that may be used in unique situations to allow FEMA to map the areas previously shown as being protected by the levee (accredited) as a "Restoration" Zone (Zone AR). Initial information provided to us by the USACE indicates that these levees *may* meet the requirements for Zone AR designation. In order to be considered, the Chief Elected Official must provide a written request to FEMA for the restoration zone designation. There are specific submittal requirements that must be included with the request. Attached are several documents that may help you decide if you want to pursue the Zone AR designation. In order to be considered for a Zone AR designation when the preliminary map is distributed, your official request package must be received by this office by January 30, 2008.

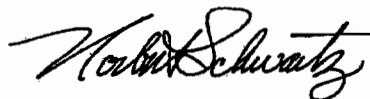
FEMA will issue Preliminary Maps when the de-accredited mapping is completed. At that time, FEMA will conduct a Flood Risk Information Open House and will meet with local officials and the public regarding the revised maps. Following this meeting, a 90-day Appeal/Protest Period will be held. When all Appeals/Protests are resolved, FEMA will issue the Letter of Final Determination. Final DFIRMs will be distributed that will become effective 6 months after the date of the Letter of Final Determination.

We encourage you to inform property owners behind the levee of this change. FEMA has produced a variety of outreach materials which can be used to educate and inform the public about the risks associated with levees and how they can better protect themselves against those risks. These materials are located online at:

http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/lv_intro.shtm.

If you need additional information or assistance, please contact Ms. Terry Reuss Fell, Chief of the Floodplain Management & Insurance Branch, by email at terry.fell@dhs.gov or by phone at 312-408-5587.

Sincerely,



Mr. Norbert F. Schwartz, Director
Mitigation Division
FEMA Region V

Enclosures:

- 44 CFR Section 65.10: "Mapping of Areas Protected by Levee Systems"
- Submittal Requirements for Restoration Zone (Zone AR) – (2 pages)
- Flood Control Restoration Zone Requirements (4 pages)
- AR Zone 44 CFR Section 65.14, part 60.3(f), and definition of "developed area"

cc: Andrew Economy, Metro East Sanitary District
Wallace Carson, Alorton Floodplain Administrator
Paul Osman, IL DNR/ NFIP State Coordinator
Mr. Les Sterman, EW Gateway Council of Governments
Colonel Lewis Setliff, USACE, St. Louis District
Senator Richard Durbin
Senator Barack Obama
Congressman Jerry Costello
Congressman John Shimkus